



TONY HORSEMAN
three goals

CLAPTON VISIT

CLAPTON, second from the foot of the Rothmans Isthmian League table, are the visitors at Loakes Park Tomorrow (Saturday) when Wycombe Wanderers will be bidding for their 16th success of the season.

Little has gone right for Clapton this season but not long ago, they pulled off one of the major shocks of the season when they beat Enfield, of all people, 4-1.

Despite their poor record, however, they have picked up a little recently, drawing 1-1 with Sutton at Gander Green Lane.

Bonus time at Tooting

Tooting and Mitcham 0. Wycombe Wanderers 3

THE ability to adapt to the atrocious conditions at Sandy Lane on Saturday earned Wycombe Wanderers three Rothmans Isthmian League points and their fifth £40 bonus from the sponsors. Steady rain on Friday meant the pitch at Tooting was waterlogged, but the Blues overcame the problem well and ran out deserved winners with two fine goals from Tony Horseman and another from Dylan Evans.

If there were any fears that Wanderers might be suffering from a hangover after the Peterborough F.A. Cup defeat, they were soon dispelled. From the start, Wycombe looked a much more constructive outfit — far more enthusiastic and determined. Tooting on the other hand, could never come to terms with the mud and failed to match Wycombe for sheer work rate.

The man who stood out in this department was Terry Reardon. Revelling in the wet, Reardon was the complete master of the conditions, judging the ball perfectly and gaining complete midfield domination for Wycombe. Of course, he was well supported by Larry Pritchard and Mick Holifield, these three providing the base for victory.

The Blues could hardly have wished for a better start. In the very first minute of the game they were a goal up — thanks to the experience of veteran striker Tony Horseman. "Bodger" immediately saw the danger as one of the home defenders attempted to pass the ball back to goalkeeper Dave Cobb inside his own area. The ball struck a patch of water and stopped, Cobb was left stranded and Horseman nipped in to neatly curve the ball home.

Mis-kicks were commonplace as the sides struggled with the conditions early on, but Horseman missed a great chance to increase the lead in the 10th minute when he headed Holifield's corner past the post.

With passes going astray regularly, it soon became obvious the best ploy of attack was down the flanks which were firm compared with the quagmire in the centre of the pitch. It was from one such move that brought Wycombe a corner in the 27th minute. Amos came back to help out his defence but in trying to clear, he almost put through his own goal and from the flag kick, Cobb just managed to save Steve Perrin's header with his legs.

But Wycombe's pressure was rewarded in the 30th minute. The ball came across from the wing to Holifield, who tried a shot at goal. The ball once again stuck fast in the mud and fell perfectly for Horseman to beat Cobb with a well placed shot into the corner.

In the first half it was obvious that the end Tooting were defending had suffered far more from the rain and one wondered whether Wycombe would make the same misjudgements in the second period.

Only three minutes of the half had elapsed when Paul Birdseye took a free kick on the right. The ball sailed across to Perrin who flicked on to Evans at the far post. From five yards out, Dylan caught the ball perfectly and sent it racing past Cobb in fine style.

Alan Ives, Tooting's talented forward with no less than 20 goals to his credit this term, tried the occasional long shot but Maskell was equal to all Tooting's efforts and with the midfield supremacy assured, Wycombe pressed forward. One superb move in the 62nd minute almost brough Evans a second goal when a fine run and cross by Holifield fell perfectly for the Welshman, but his full-blooded drive struck a defender and was hastily cleared.

In the 71st minute Tooting raced back when a misdirected header by Wood fell straight into the path of Ives, whose firm shot was deflected by Maskell to Clark. The substitute also fired in a drive but again the Blues goalkeeper managed to deflect the shot away.

Rob Williams came on for Horseman, who had done his job admirably, in the 78th minute and this merely reinforced midfield. Holifield moved onto the left wing and put in several fine attacking runs.

Tooting, however, had the last word when they spurned the best chance of the match with only a couple of minutes left. Birdseye miskicked in attempting to clear and Ives capitalised on the error, sprinting into the area from a narrow angle. His eventual shot, however, was well saved by Maskell, diving to his right.

S.E.

TOOTING: D. Cobb; K. Roots, R. Green, B. Smith, K. Sheehan, C. Gedney, M. Newman (sub D. Clark 60 mins.), A. Berrecloth, A. Amos, A. Coppin, A. Ives.

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell; P. Birdseye, P. Wood, D. Bullock, R. Grant, T. Reardon, L. Pritchard, M. Holifield, A. Horseman (sub R. Williams 78 mins.), D. Evans, S. Perrin.

Referee: P. E. F. Knock (Oxford).

Half-time: 0-2. **Goalscorers:** Wycombe — Horseman 2 (1, 30), Evans (48).